

Francis will retire today, June 30, 2010, from her positions as the executive director of both the Alaska Council of School Administrators and the Association of Alaska School Administrators. Her leadership, advocacy, encouragement, and experience will be missed.

Mary's career in education began as an English teacher. Over the course of time, her skills and dedication brought her to different jobs in communities across Alaska. Her first assignment as an administrator was as curriculum director for the Lower Kuskokwim School District, a district that includes some of Alaska's most remote villages along the Kuskokwim River in southwest Alaska. Later, as assistant superintendent in Fairbanks, she experienced life "in the big city"—a comparative term as Alaskan cities go. The bulk of her career, though, has been spent in southeast Alaska, as superintendent in Wrangell, a 12-year tenure as Petersburg's superintendent, and most recently 8 years in Juneau serving Alaska's school administrators.

It was in Petersburg where Mary's competence was recognized on the national stage when she was selected by her peers and recognized by the American Association of School Administrators as Alaska's Superintendent of the Year in 2000.

At the time of her retirement from Petersburg, Mary briefly considered spending her remaining years playing golf and enjoying life. She quickly realized that she would be bored stiff and accepted the position as executive director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators in 2002. This is not an easy job, as Mary was asked to represent the diverse perspectives of superintendents and other central office administrators, university professors, elementary and secondary principals, and school business officials. As executive director, Mary was also asked to assist these diverse member organizations to accomplish their mission: to provide leadership for and promotion of a collective professional voice in setting the educational agenda for Alaska. Throughout her tenure, Mary provided inspiration, authentic understanding, advocacy, and encouragement to the council as a whole as well as to its individual members.

Mary Francis has done this difficult job with grace, tact, firmness, and a sense of humor for 8 years. Mary noted, in announcing her resignation, "There is never a good time to make a decision to leave a position. However, ACSA's financial position is sound and with a working Strategic Plan in place, the organization is on solid footing now and for the future."

ACSA Board President Pete Swanson remarked, "Dr. Francis' resignation has been accepted with reluctance by the Board. She will be sorely missed as she provides just the right balance of oversight for our board and the AASA board for whom she also serves in the Executive Director capacity. Her abil-

ity to advocate for and represent the school administrators of Alaska with the Legislature and many statewide committee forums is considerable. Dr. Francis leaves a legacy of working hard for the concerns and issues of Alaska's school administrators."

On behalf of the countless educators whose lives she has touched, I extend my gratitude to Dr. Mary A. Francis for her selfless dedication to advancing the cause of education in Alaska and I wish her a happy, healthy, and exciting retirement.●

REMEMBERING CEDRIC ERROLL FLOWERS, JR.

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Cedric Erroll Flowers, Jr., my dear friend who passed away on May 25, 2010.

Cedric was born and raised in Sumter County, AL, where he attended Demopolis High School. There, he developed an interest in English literature and world history, as well as a passion for music. He devoted his ample talents to the piano and the clarinet, the latter of which he played for the Demopolis High School concert band. This is remarkable given his failing, and eventual loss of, eyesight. Despite his blindness, Cedric excelled in high school.

Following graduation from Demopolis High School in 1951, Cedric enrolled at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind where he pursued his love of music. Without eyes to guide him, Cedric studied and mastered the art of piano tuning by ear. It was also at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind where he met Sue Akel, whom he would later marry in 1962.

After earning his degree from the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, Cedric took his newly acquired skills to Savannah, GA, where he cared for all the pianos within the Chatham County and Savannah City Schools. In 1954, he came back to Alabama where he performed this same invaluable service for the concert series program at my alma mater, the University of Alabama.

In 1964, Cedric opened his own business, Flowers Piano Company. Known as the "People Who Know Pianos," Flowers Piano Company began as a specialty piano retail store and a service-based enterprise. For many years, Cedric, who was also instrumental in founding the Tuscaloosa Music Merchants Association, served as the exclusive local dealer of high-end pianos in the Tuscaloosa area. As his business flourished, Cedric expanded the store's inventory to include band instruments and sheet music and offer beginner piano lessons.

Cedric's passion for tending to pianos did not cease with the establishment of his company. His skills as a Master Concert Tuner/Technician served the Piano Technicians Guild and the National Association of Music Merchants well. In fact, while continuing to serve

and provide equipment to the University of Alabama, he worked with artists and musical groups who performed in and around Tuscaloosa and Birmingham. His expertise and precision benefitted music and entertainment throughout Tuscaloosa and Jefferson Counties.

Cedric also served the Tuscaloosa community as a deacon at the First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa and a volunteer for many music and art-related endeavors and causes.

A faithful member of the University of Alabama family, Cedric never missed game day play-by-play radio coverage of the Crimson Tide. I can only imagine how happy he was to hear the sweet sound of the Million Dollar Band playing "Yea, Alabama" in the Rose Bowl following the Tide's BCS National Championship victory this past January.

I was fortunate to have known Cedric during his time here, and I mourn his passing. He is loved and respected throughout our community and will be missed by his beloved wife of 47 years, Sue, and his daughter, Marcia. I ask the entire Senate to join me in recognizing and honoring the life of my friend, Cedric Erroll Flowers, Jr.●

RECOGNIZING GERALD PELLETIER INC.

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, this summer, thousands of Mainers and Americans will be drawn to the town of Millinocket to enjoy the natural beauty of Maine's outdoors. This year, however, they will also have the opportunity to enjoy the bountiful meals provided by the Pelletier family at the Pelletier Loggers Family Restaurant. Besides serving up hearty Maine cooking to locals and tourists alike, the Pelletier family performs the herculean task of delivering many thousands of cords of firewood each year to the people of Maine through their extensive logging operations. As such, I rise today to honor the Pelletier family and their small business, Gerald Pelletier, Inc., which has continued to embrace the spirit of entrepreneurship by providing critical jobs to rural Mainers as well as serving the people of our State for over 50 years.

What began as a log hauling operation in 1954 by a father that wanted to put extra food on the table during the winter months, eventually developed into a successful logging operation employing family members and dozens of Mainers alike. Gerald Pelletier Inc., produces over 200,000 cords of firewood each year, much of which is hauled over the Golden Road, a treacherous logging highway cutting through the Maine woods to the Canadian border. The company's logging operation is carried out with the utmost care thanks to the training many of the workers receive through the Certified Logging Professionals program, which trains and certifies loggers in safe, efficient, and environmentally sound logging practices. The company is also a